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THE ANTI-UNION.

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TO THE
EDITORS OF THE ANTI-UNION.

AS the arguments from which the consequences of an Union to the commerce of this kingdom, are inferred by the writers on the different sides of the question, have led to opposite conclusions, so have they been very dissimilar in their nature. The reasoning of the advocate for the measure, consists entirely of conjecture and speculation; while his opponent professes to deduce his inferences from facts and the experience of mankind. The former foresees, or affects to foresee, that the necessary result of a Legislative Incorporation of the two countries, will be an oblivion of old jealousies, a generous participation of every advantage, political and commercial, individuality of feeling, and identity of interest. Thus, he reasons, the bounties of nature to this country, will be animated into exertion, and the transfer of capital and ingenuity from Britain, will give to this part of the future empire, that wealth, which, from its geographical position, the excellence of its harbours, the fertility of its soil, and the number of its inhabitants, it seems to have been destined by nature to possess. The reasoning of the latter, is, however, conducted in a different manner. He seems to avoid every inference which can only be drawn from a remote contingency; and rejecting arguments from possibilities as rash and fallacious, his enquiries seem to be entirely directed by a retrospect to past events. Guided in his investigation, by this mode of reasoning, when he looks into the history of these Islands, and sees, on the one hand, the oppression, amounting to extinguishment, which the commerce of this nation suffered, while it was subject to the controul or influence of England, and when, on the other hand, he beholds the rapid and unexampled progress with which it has advanced since its fetters were struck off, he is led to infer, that the commercial prosperity of Ireland is intimately connected with her Legislative Independence, and that British dominion or interference, must be deadly to its existence. This deduction claims to be warranted by experience in another respect. The pecuniary advantage which it is conjectured Ireland will obtain by this measure, is not such as one nation gains from reciprocal trade with another, because this not only is consistent with, but necessarily implies, mutual benefit. It is an acquisition, which presupposes proportional loss to the other parts of the empire. If the natural advantages of Ireland were

left to the improvement of her own people; although, in this particular, she could be no gainer by the measure, yet Britain could be no loser; and when to promote any benefit to Ireland, it is necessary to presume the transfer from Britain, of both capital and skill, the argument drawn from experience is again applied, and it is urged, that history furnishes no precedent of a commercial nation voluntarily encouraging the superior capabilities of a neighbouring commercial people, and generously giving them its blood, and the sinews of its strength, to encrease their vigour.

In considering these two modes of reasoning, candor cannot refuse to admit, that in general the inference which, on political subjects, is suggested by facts and experience, is that which deserves adoption. The science of politics, is, in its nature, rather practical than abstract, and as it is best illustrated by experiments, it derives its chief support from history, which records the transactions of states, and furnishes examples appropriate to occurring cases. In this point of view, it must be acknowledged that one plain, unequivocal, and applicable fact, in a political controversy, outweighs the most subtle and refined train of reasoning, which rests merely on speculation; or as the same idea is expressed in the Castle Pamphlet, page 28, "An argument from experience, in political reasoning, is superior to any argument in theory." If, therefore, the adversary of the measure of an Union, can shew by historical facts, and the testimony of political writers, unbiased in favour of Ireland, that it is the character of all commercial nations, and of England in particular, to be tenacious even to illiberality, perhaps injustice, of their peculiar possessions; that the conduct of England towards Ireland, while the former derived from her own comparative strength, and the weakness of the latter, her only right of dominion, was in the greatest degree selfish and ungenerous; that the benefits which have been promised to Ireland, from an Union, cannot reasonably be expected, and that the people of England, who have ever thought on the subject, have uniformly considered that measure as conferring an exclusive, or superior benefit on their native country; and if, in opposition to these facts and testimonies, there be nothing relied on, but supposition and theory, it will not be difficult to determine on which side the argument will preponderate. It is my intention to produce to each of these points, one or two facts or authorities, which I am persuaded no man can dispute or deny.

The first of these topics I consider of importance only as one of the intermediate steps, which connect the

main subject with what, in my mind, amounts, to its demonstration; and I shall dismiss it with a short, but pointed quotation from Montesquieu: "The spirit of trade produces in the mind of man, a certain sense of exact justice, opposite, on the one hand, to robbery, and on the other, to those moral virtues, which forbid our always adhering rigidly to the rules of private interest, and suffer us to neglect this for the advantage of others." See. vol. Spir. of Laws, page 2. And in page 8: "The English are supremely jealous with respect to trade, and bind themselves but little by treaties, &c."

On the second topic, examples may be obtained in profusion, and I might content myself with alluding to the remarkable petition of some Englishmen, against the Irish, for fishing on their own coast, but I shall give two facts, and one testimony, which are not generally known. The first fact I take from Smith's Wealth of Nations, vol. 1. page 451. where he states, that altho' the free importation of the rude produce of the soil, can have no ill effect upon the agriculture of a country, and of all species of importation, that of lean cattle must be least disadvantageous to the importing country, yet such was the jealousy of England towards Ireland, that such a traffic was permitted but for a short time, altho' the trade was considered so destructive to Ireland, that it there occasioned mobbish opposition. The second fact I take from Postlethwaite's Commercial Essays, vol. 1. page 44. "The English think it better policy to suffer France to supplant them in the woollen trade, by means of manufacturing Irish wool, than suffer the Irish to rival them in the woollen manufacture, although subjects of the same Prince." The testimony I take from the same volume, page 196: "England has hitherto, at her own expence, maintained the balance of Europe, and it has cost Ireland scarce any thing; all that we have endeavoured is to starve her without expence."

The next topic is of such a kind, that an applicable fact cannot be expected; but I shall produce what is of at least equal weight, the acknowledgment of a very able English writer, on the direct point, in a treatise written on the very subject of an Incorporated Union of the two countries. It is to be observed that the advantages which it is imagined Ireland will derive from the measure, in commerce and manufactures, presuppose the transfer from England of capital and skill; of course, if these which are preliminary, cannot reasonably be expected, it would be absurd to look for the particular consequence. A tract written by Mr. Chalmers, forming a supplement to De Lolme, has two passages which furnish evidence both as to commerce and manufacture; as to the former, "the British merchant will never embark his capital in what he considers as a foreign country, the trade of which will not have sufficient attraction to induce him to renounce even in part the traffic with which he is well acquainted, and the profits which he hath long enjoyed. But he will be far less disposed to make his renuncia-

tion in favour of a species of traffic which he, probably, considers as interfering, to a degree of strenuous rivalry, with the proper commerce of his native country." As to manufactures, the same tract states—"that it has been demonstrated, and is a truth generally received, that a poor nation can never carry away from a rich one those manufactures, the cheapness of which depends chiefly on large capitals." It may be observed, that there is no manufacture, except, perhaps, the linen, of which we have possession, in which largeness of capital does not necessarily operate to cheapen the articles of its produce; and if Mr. Chalmers be a competent judge, it will appear, that the hope that British merchants and manufacturers will establish themselves in Ireland on account of its poverty and natural advantages, is such as no rational man, be he ever so sanguine, could entertain. I shall now complete my proposed plan, by producing a few authorities to shew, that in the measure of an Union with this country, such Englishmen as have written on the subject have looked on it, not as productive of mutual and equal benefit to both nations, but as the means of giving to England superior, or exclusive advantage.

The first which I shall produce, rather because he at one time seemed to think kindly of Ireland, than for his rank, is the Duke of Richmond. In his address to the Volunteer Delegates he says—"I am sensible there are great difficulties attending the adjustment of an Union, and that it requires great wisdom and temper to form it, especially on the part of Ireland, *which must feel* that she ought to give the preponderance to Great Britain." My next authority shall be Dean Tucker, who, in considering the consequences to England of an Union with Ireland has these words:—"Many of the necessities of life would be imported cheaper into England from Ireland than they can now be purchased, a great advantage this to the merchant and manufacturer; and many more of the luxuries, ornaments, and delicacies of living, would be exported from hence into Ireland; likewise, the inducement of being near the parliament, the court, the public funds, &c. would bring many more Irish families to reside and spend their fortunes here than now do." My next authority shall be Postlethwaite, who, in the first volume of his Essays, page 209, has this curious passage—"Keeping Ireland a separate kingdom hath supported the Irish in the pretence of a right to it; and whenever they have an opportunity they call their parliaments and make laws, but if they were abolished, and the kingdom united with England, we should become one people, which we can never be, though we are one blood, while we live under different laws and governments. I would not mean that all the immunities that England hath in trade and manufactures should be allowed to Ireland, but only encouraged, in such a way as to advance England through Ireland." I shall conclude with an extract as remarkable as the former; it is taken from a treatise

written on the subject of an Union of England with Ireland, by Sir Francis Brewster, in the year 1702, and quoted in the first vol. of Postle. page 207.—“ It may be objected, that if Ireland was united they would have equal liberty of trade with England; to which it is answered, that doth not follow; they may be better restrained by the Union than they can be under the constitution they have at present; for, although England may now make laws for them, yet, they in Ireland are judges and executioners of them; and *how far they will enforce laws against the interest of their country is submitted; but when they are made by their representatives here in parliament, and liable to be questioned here if not observed, the case will be altered.*”

Let not the design of this paper be misinterpreted—my only object is to undeceive the credulity of such of my countrymen, if such there be, who still imagine that the ministerial measure of an Union, the avowed and only object of which is finance, can effectually operate to blend the affections, and identify the interests of the two countries. If there be yet men who believe in the idle romance which represents the treasure of Britain circulating through this limb of the consolidating empire, and who cherish the vain hope of enticing from England its capital and manufactures; since such men close their minds against the evidence of history and human nature, let them look to Scotland, thriving not from the introduction of English money or skill, but from the efforts of its own industry; and if they still dream of the transfer of the means of prosperity from England, let them, if they have understandings, be convinced by the testimony of Englishmen themselves, who seek for an incorporated Union as the best method of making Ireland instrumental to the aggrandizement of England.

MERCATOR.

AT THE

MUSEUM, COLLEGE-GREEN,

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,

IN a few days, (if not previously disposed of by private contract,) in College-Green, where they will be brought for the purpose—

A very large collection of Automata, amounting in the whole to above an hundred, and some of them extremely curious. They have been for the most part lately purchased by a Noble Lord, who has travelled in the East and other parts of the world; but there are a

few which from having been purchased up by a young Nobleman of but small judgment in such matters will therefore be sold cheap. The reason of their being thus exposed to open sale, is, that their present proprietors will soon be under the necessity of retiring from this country, and not being able to remove them to another kingdom as they intended, they do not wish to be any longer incumbered with them. A small number are so ingeniously contrived as to utter any speeches that may be prepared for them by their purchasers: In short, they want nothing but the spirit of real men to be accounted as such. Among those which will be sold cheap are the following:

Two strange attempts at Alexander the Great:—The first apparently as dull as a modern alderman, and evidently would seem to be no very able leader even of a Praetorian band, much less the Macedonian phalanx. The other just fit to stop beer barrels.

An antient, bald, withered, sapless, figure, exhibiting a most laughable mixture of poppery and old age, adorned with a large silver star most obtrusively hidden: This article having been very frequently on sale is well known to the public.

A most ridiculous piece of mechanism, dressed in a new suit of regimentals: From the hopeless stupidity of its countenance, and sluggish clumsiness of its frame, one should imagine it was made by a journeyman, it “ imitates humanity so abominably”—yet it can be easily moved, but it is observable that all attempts to incline it to the right side have failed, while with the smallest purchase you can readily warp it to the sinister.

A large figure, once esteemed valuable, but having been lately discovered to be internally unsound, and being thought likely to grow worse daily, it will be sold for whatever it may bring: It has lately, as a matter of convenience, been furnished with a new case, but as neither the figure or case seem to be at all adapted to each other, its being stuck into it has injured it greatly. With several others too numerous to particularize here.

THE manager of the Royal Circus, Foster-Place, thinks it necessary to inform the public, that notwithstanding the celebrated piece of the UNION, was obliged to be withdrawn on the first night of performance, owing to the impossibility of collecting a sufficient number of actors at that time, and he has been employed during the present recess in making every possible effort to bring it forward in such a stile as must ensure success. He assures them that no object of salary to the performers shall deter him from engaging the most eminent of their profession. He has had a number of agents in this and the sister country to endeavour to obtain